

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 DHA-02 ORM-02 OMB-01 AID-05

MMO-01 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /087 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5672

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT LOUIS 0092

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MARR IN US MP

SUBJECT: RESETTLEMENT OF DIEGO GARCIA ISLANDERS

1. FOR PAST WEEK R. R. G. PROSSER, ADVISOR ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT TO MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT, LONDON, HAS BEEN IN MAURITIUS TO ADVISE ON RESETTLEMENT OF DIEGO GARCIA ISLANDERS. PROSSER MET TWICE WITH PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM AND TWICE WITH THE ISLANDERS TO DISCUSS BEST WAY TO UTILIZE LB. 650,000 GIVEN GOM FOR THE PURPOSE. PROSSER CONVINCED THAT ISLANDERS DO NOT WISH TO BE TRANSPORZED TO AN OUTLYPNG ISLAND OR TO ENGAGE IN COCONUT GATHERING OR SMALL-TIME FISHING BUT WANT TO BE INTEGRATED INTO MAURITIAN SOCIETY AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. HE SUGGESTED A SCHEME TO PRIME MINISTER THAT WOULD INVOLVE QUICK ACTION FOR LIMITED NUMBER OF AGED AND INFIRM ISLANDERS TO BE RESETTLED BY GOM WELFARE DEPARTMENT NEAR A CATHOLIC CHARITABLE INSTITUTE THAT COULD PROVIDE ONGOING WELFARE ASSISTANCE. FOR THE FAR LARGER NUMBER OF ISLANDERS THAT ARE ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES IN MAURITIUS, HE SUGGESTED A HOUSING SCHEME THAT WOULD PROVIDE A BASIC "SUB-STANDARD" HOUSE FOR EACH HOUSEHOLD USING MOST OF THE AVAILABLE FUNDS WITH SOME FUNDS EARMARKED FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION. PRIME MINISTER ACCEPTED IN GENERAL TERMS ABOVE PLAN OF ACTION BUT INSISTED THAT ISLANDERS BE PROVIDED WITH MUCH BETTER QUALITY HOUSING AND

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OTHER FACILITIES INCLUDING TWO NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OR

EXTENSIONS TO PRESENT SCHOOLS AND A BRITISH PROJECT OFFICER TO RUN THE PROGRAM. PROSSER TOLD CHARGE THAT PROGRAM PRIME MINISTER WAS HOLDING OUT FOR WOULD ADD AS MUCH AS LB. 300,000 TO COST OF RESETTLEMENT.

2. SINCE PROSSER HAS NO AUTHORITY TO GO BEYOND THE LB. 650,000 ALREADY GIVEN MAURITIUS, HE STATES HIS NEXT STEP IS TO REPORT HIS FINDINGS TO LONDON WHEN HE RETURNS AFTER A SCHEDULED VISIT TO TANZANIA.

3. PROSSER TOLD CHARGE THAT SUBJECT OF POSSIBLE US ASSISTANCE CAME UP TWICE: (1) PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM SUGGESTED IN FIRST MEETING THAT AMERICANS MIGHT WISH TO CONTRIBUTE TO RESETTLEMENT COST AND (2) ISLANDERS ASKED PROSSER IF AMERICANS WERE INVOLVED IN THE RESETTLEMENT, TO WHICH HE RESPONDED THAT IT WAS ENTIRELY UP TO BRITISH AND GOM. CHARGE LATER TOLD BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER THAT WE KNOW OF NO REASON THE RAMGOOLAM WOULD BELIEVE THAT AMERICAN ASSISTANCE MIGHT BE FORTHCOMING. IN FACT, USG FELT RESETTLEMENT OF ISLANDERS WAS ENTIRELY UP TO UK AND GOM.

4. PROSSER RELUCTANT TO ENDORSE REQUEST FOR BRITISH PROJECT OFFICER. HOWEVER HE IS MOST ANXIOUS THAT CHURCH WORLD SERVICE WELFARE WORKER, NANCY ROBINSON, SHOULD CONTINUE HER WORK WITH THE ISLANDERS.
HEATLEY

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Message Attributes

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